GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SHIPPING
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2594
ANSWERED ON:05.12.2001
INLAND WATERWAYS
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Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned `Inland Waterways Spots Projects for private players`, appearing in the Business Standard, dated September 3,2001;

(b) if so, the details of the projects likely to be given to private players;

(c) the terms and conditions thereof, projects -wise;

(d) whether it is a fact that India has an extensive network of waterways;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) the extent to which it has been explored so far; and

(g) the steps being taken for optimum utilisation of waterways?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI SHRIPAD Y. NAIK)

(a),(b),(c),(d),(e),(f) & (g) : With a view to giving an impetus to IWTsector and to encourage private sector participation in IWT infrastructure development and ownership and operation of inland vessels, the Government has approved an IWT policy which includes several Policy measures and incentives to facilitate investment in this sector.

To popularize this Policy with various stakeholders in IWT sector, four interactive meets have been organized at Delhi, Patna, Kochi and Guwahati. Some indicative/provisional possible proposals for private sector participation were prepared and circulated in these meets. These were very preliminary proposals made with a view to start the discussion with prospective private sector entrepreneurs. A few of them have since shown interest in this regard.

Details of these proposals and terms and conditions would be worked out in consultation with the entrepreneurs.

According to National Transport Policy Committee Report (1980) India has about 14,500 Km of navigable inland waterways out of which 5700 km are suitable for navigation by mechanized craft. The NTPC report identified ten waterways as having potential for declaration and development as National Waterways namely;

i) The Ganga-Bhagirathi-Hooghly river system
ii) The Brahmaputra
iii) The West Coast Canal
iv) The Sunderbans
v) The Godavari
vi) The Krishna
vii) The Mahanadi
viii) The Narmada
ix) The Mandovi, Zuari rivers and Cumberjua canal in Goa
x) The Tapi

So far, three waterways namely the Ganga from Haldia to Allahabad, the Brahmaputra from Dhubri to Sadiya and West Coast Canal from Kottapuram to Kollam along with Udyogmandal and Champakara canals have been declared as national waterways.

Techno-economic feasibility studies for assessing the potential/navigability of the following inland waterways have been conducted :-

1. The Sunderbans

2. The Barak River

3. Kakinada-Marcaunam canal integrated with river Krishna and Godavari.

4. East Coast Canal integrated with Brahmani river

5. DVC Canal
6. Extension of NW-3 upto Kovalam in the south and Kasargod in the North

The declaration of the above waterways as national waterways and their subsequent development would be considered subject to availability of resources.

Various schemes for provisions of infrastructure such as navigational channel, terminals at selected locations and navigational aids are being planned and executed in a phased manner by IWAI on the three national waterways.

Provision also exists under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme for the Inland Water Transport sector for loan assistance to state govts. up to 50% of the cost of the schemes on reimbursement basis for development of inland waterways and waterway infrastructure.

With a view to giving an impetus to IWT sector and to encourage private sector participation in IWT sector,Government has approved an IWT Policy.